

ROBERT ELLSWORTH FENG

Librettist

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Robert Ellsworth Feng is a Chinese-American bass and librettist from Kailua, HI. Recently, Feng was a speaker at the 2025 OPERA America Conference in the panel “*In Search of the Perfect Libretto.*”

Feng’s first opera ***Having Guests for Dinner*** is a 1-act horror/comedy with music by Nick Bentz. It premiered virtually with New Opera West in 2020 and has since been produced at Hartford Opera Theater, Central Washington University, and Hillman Opera at SUNY Fredonia. The full length version was commissioned and co-produced by Chicago based company Kor Productions. Feng and Bentz’s second opera ***Salmo***, a grand space opera in four acts, will be workshopped at Brown University for their 2026/27 Academic Year.

Other operatic works include ***Ye Ol’Factory*** - a pastiche of new works with script and micro-opera ***The Wake: A Fishous Cycle*** (music by Josiah Garza) written by Feng commissioned by Wiedflower Arts, the supernatural horror opera ***You Do Not Recognize the Bodies in the Water*** with music by Felix Jarrar workshopped at OPERA America in 2022, and the political satire ***Chew On This*** with music by Yunfei Li commissioned by Lyric Opera of Kansas City and No Divide KC for their Come As You Are (CAYA) Festival. ***Chew On This*** was described as “truly an operette for our times” (S. Fairbank). Upcoming projects include ***Extinction Event*** with music by Meilina Tsui, a full-length opera (Title TBA) commissioned by Performing Arts Laboratory in collaboration with Bloomington Opera to premiere Spring 2026, and ***Thanatography*** (part of *Kin Psalms: A Patchwork Opera*) with music by Josiah Garza, commissioned by and to be premiered with Washington National Opera in Spring 2026,.

Robert holds degrees from Peabody Conservatory and Manhattan School of Music and is a recipient of the Peabody Career Development Award. Feng is an alum of the CAYA Festival Fellowship in Kansas City, the Wiedflower Arts Residency in Baltimore, Really Spicy Opera’s Aria Institute for Composers & Librettists: Sci-Fi Edition and Librettist Workshop, and the Alliance for New Music-Theatre’s Composer-Librettist Studio. Currently, Feng is a Librettist Opera Fellow with Performing Arts Laboratory.